AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for distributing multimedia content, the method comprising:

storing an item of multimedia content as stored multimedia content at a multimedia message center (MMSC);

firstly transcoding said multimedia content for playback on a first multimedia device, thereby producing a firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content;

generating a content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content;

storing said content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, as a stored first content ID, in association with said stored multimedia content;

receiving, at said MMSC via a multimedia message service (MMS) message, an instruction to forward said item of multimedia content to a second multimedia device, said instruction comprising a copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content; and

performing the following in response to said instruction:

accessing said stored content using said stored first content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, said accessing comprising:

generating a received content ID of said copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content; and

looking up said stored multimedia content by comparing said received content ID with said stored first content ID; and

transcoding said stored multimedia content for playback on said second multimedia device.

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 wherein said storing an item of multimedia content comprises storing said item of multimedia content together with an original content identifier (ID) identifying said content.

Claim 4 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 wherein said storing an item of multimedia content comprises storing said item of multimedia content together with an original content identifier (ID) that uniquely identifies said content.

Claim 5 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 wherein said storing an item of multimedia content comprises storing said item of multimedia content in its original form.

Claim 6 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 wherein said storing an item of multimedia content comprises storing said item of multimedia content such that said content may be partly or wholly reconstituted.

Claim 7 (original): A method according to claim 3 and further comprising receiving said original content ID from a provider of said content.

Claim 8 (original): A method according to claim 3 and further comprising generating said original content ID by applying either of a predefined hashing method and a predefined fingerprinting method to said content and using either of the resulting hash and fingerprint as said original content ID.

Claim 9 (previously presented): A method according to claim 3 and further comprising associating said original content ID with different transcoded versions of said content.

Claim 10 (original): A method according to claim 1 and further comprising sending a notification to said first multimedia device indicating that said content is available for download to said multimedia device.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1 and further comprising delivering said firstly transcoded content to said first multimedia device in an MMS message.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1 and further comprising delivering said firstly transcoded content to said first multimedia device, in an MMS message, together with any of said content IDs.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A method according to claim 11 and further comprising:

receiving said firstly transcoded content from said first multimedia device in an MMS message; and

regenerating said content ID of said firstly transcoded content.

Claim 14 (original): A method according to claim 13 wherein said regenerating step comprises regenerating said content ID of said firstly transcoded content using the same method used to generate said content ID of said firstly transcoded content.

Claims 15 - 16 (cancelled)

Claim 17 (original): A method according to claim 1 and further comprising protecting any of said transcoded content with a content protection key (CPK).

Claim 18 (original): A method according to claim 1 and further comprising:

identifying any rights associated with providing said content to any of said multimedia devices;

generating at least one entitlement as a function of said rights; and

providing said content to any of said multimedia devices in accordance with said entitlement.

Claim 19 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 and further comprising:

determining if said copy of said firstly transcoded content is protected;

if said copy is protected, determining if said content may be forwarded to said second multimedia device as indicated by any rights associated with either of said content and the recipient of said firstly transcoded content; and

if said content may be forwarded, protecting and forwarding said secondly transcoded content to said second multimedia device.

Claim 20 (original): A method according to claim 19 and further comprising protecting said secondly transcoded content with a content protection key (CPK) associated with said secondly transcoded content.

Claim 21 (original): A method according to claim 19 wherein said first determining step comprises determining that said copy of said firstly transcoded content is protected by identifying a CPK stored in association with the content ID.

Claims 22 - 25 (cancelled)

Claim 26 (currently amended): A multimedia content distribution system comprising:

an MMS server;

an MMS relay;

a transcoder; and

a DRM server,

wherein said MMS server, MMS relay, transcoder, and DRM server are individually or cooperatively operative to:

store an item of a multimedia content as stored multimedia content;

firstly transcode said multimedia content for playback on a first multimedia device, thereby producing a firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content;

generate a content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content;

store said content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, as a stored first content ID, in association with said stored multimedia content;

receive an instruction, via a multimedia message service (MMS) message, to forward said item of multimedia content to a second multimedia device, said instruction comprising a copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content; and

perform the following in response to said instruction:

access said stored content using said stored first content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, comprising:

generating a received content ID of said copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content; and

looking up said stored multimedia content by comparing said received content ID with said stored first content ID; and

transcode said stored multimedia content for playback on said second multimedia device.

Claim 27 (original): A system according to claim 26 wherein any of said MMS server, MMS relay, transcoder, and DRM server are individually or cooperatively operative to track to whom said content is sent and with what rights.

Claim 28 (original): A system according to claim 26 wherein said DRM server acts as either of a probe and a proxy between any of said MMS server, said MMS relay, and said transcoder.

Claim 29 (currently amended): A system for distributing multimedia content, the system comprising:

means for storing an item of a multimedia content as stored multimedia content at a multimedia message center (MMSC);

means for firstly transcoding said multimedia content for playback on a first multimedia device, thereby producing a firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content;

means for generating a content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content;

means for storing said content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, as a stored first content ID, in association with said stored multimedia content;

means for receiving, at said MMSC via a multimedia message service (MMS) message, an instruction to forward said item of multimedia content to a second multimedia device, said instruction comprising a copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content; and

means for performing the following in response to said instruction:

accessing said stored content using said stored first content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, said accessing comprising:

generating a received content ID of said copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content; and

looking up said stored multimedia content by comparing said received content ID with said stored first content ID; and

means for transcoding said stored multimedia content for playback on said second multimedia device.

Claim 30 (cancelled)

Claim 31 (original): A system according to claim 29 wherein said means for storing is operative to store said item of multimedia content together with an original content identifier (ID) identifying said content.

Claim 32 (original): A system according to claim 29 wherein said means for storing is operative to store said item of multimedia content together with an original content identifier (ID) that uniquely identifies said content.

Claim 33 (original): A system according to claim 29 wherein said means for storing is operative to store said item of multimedia content in its original form.

Claim 34 (original): A system according to claim 29 wherein said means for storing is operative to store said item of multimedia content such that said content may be partly or wholly reconstituted.

Claim 35 (original): A system according to claim 31 and further comprising means for receiving said original content ID from a provider of said content.

Claim 36 (original): A system according to claim 31 and further comprising means for generating said original content ID by applying either of a predefined hashing system and a predefined fingerprinting system to said content and using either of the resulting hash and fingerprint as said original content ID.

Claim 37 (original): A system according to claim 29 and further comprising means for associating said original content ID with different transcoded versions of said content.

Claim 38 (original): A system according to claim 29 and further comprising means for sending a notification to said first multimedia device indicating that said content is available for download to said multimedia device.

Claim 39 (currently amended): A system according to claim 29 and further comprising means for delivering said firstly transcoded content to said first multimedia device in an MMS message.

Claim 40 (currently amended): A system according to claim 29 and further comprising means for delivering said firstly transcoded content to said first multimedia device, in an MMS message, together with any of said content IDs.

Claim 41 (currently amended) A system according to claim 39 and further comprising:

means for receiving said firstly transcoded content from said first multimedia device in an MMS message; and

means for regenerating said content ID of said firstly transcoded content.

Claim 42 (original): A system according to claim 41 wherein said means for regenerating is operative to regenerate said content ID of said firstly transcoded content using the same system used to generate said content ID of said firstly transcoded content.

Claims 43 - 44 (cancelled)

Claim 45 (original): A system according to claim 29 and further comprising means for protecting any of said transcoded content with a content protection key (CPK).

Claim 46 (original): A system according to claim 29 and further comprising:

means for identifying any rights associated with providing said content to any of said multimedia devices;

means for generating at least one entitlement as a function of said rights; and

means for providing said content to any of said multimedia devices in accordance with said entitlement.

Claim 47 (previously presented): A system according to claim 29 and further comprising:

means for determining if said copy of said firstly transcoded content is protected;

means, responsive to said copy being protected, for determining if said content may be forwarded to said second multimedia device as indicated by any rights associated with either of said content and the recipient of said firstly transcoded content; and

means, responsive to said content being forwardable, for protecting and forwarding said secondly transcoded content to said second multimedia device.

Claim 48 (original): A system according to claim 47 and further comprising means for protecting said secondly transcoded content with a content protection key (CPK) associated with said secondly transcoded content.

Claim 49 (original): A system according to claim 47 wherein said first means for determining is operative to determine that said copy of said firstly transcoded content is protected by identifying a CPK stored in association with the content ID.

Claims 50 - 57 (cancelled)

Claim 58 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 and wherein said generating a content ID of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content comprises:

applying either of the following to said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, and producing a result:

a predefined hashing method; and

a predefined fingerprinting method; and

using said result as said content ID.

Claim 59 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 and wherein said generating a received content ID of said copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content comprises:

applying either of the following to said copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, and producing a result:

a predefined hashing method; and

a predefined fingerprinting method; and

using said result as said received content ID.

Claim 60 (previously presented): A method according to claim 58 and wherein said generating a received content ID of said copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content comprises:

applying either of the following to said copy of said firstly transcoded version of said multimedia content, and producing a result:

a predefined hashing method; and

a predefined fingerprinting method; and

using said result as said received content ID.